

**REMARKS**

Reconsideration of the present application is respectfully requested in view of the following remarks. Prior to entry of this response, Claims 1-158 were pending in the application, of which Claims 1, 9, 17, 18, 19, 31, 43, 44, 45, 60, 75, 76, 77, 83, 89, 90, 91, 97, 103, 104, 105, 113, 121, 122, 123, 127, 131, 132, 133, 140, 147, 148, 149, 153, 157, and 158 are independent. Claims 9-76, 83-90, and 97-158 have been previously withdrawn from consideration leaving Claims 1-8, 77-82, and 91-96 presently under consideration. In the Office Action dated February 4, 2004, Claims 1-8, 77-82, and 91-96 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112 and Claims 1, 4, and 77 were objected to. Following this response, Claims 1-8, 77-82, and 91-96 remain under consideration in this application. Applicants hereby address the Examiner's objections and rejections in turn.

I. Objection to the Claims

In the Office Action dated February 4, 2004, the Examiner objected to Claims 1, 4, and 77 as containing various informalities. Claims 1, 4, and 77 have been amended to address these informalities and do not narrow the claimed subject matter. Applicants respectfully submit that the amendment overcomes this objection and adds no new matter.

II. Rejection of the Claims Under 35 U.S.C. § 112, Second Paragraph

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected Claims 1-8, 77-82, and 91-96 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point

out and distinctly claim the subject matter which the Applicants regard as their invention. Claims 1, 77, and 91 have been amended and Applicants respectfully submit that these amendments overcome the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112.

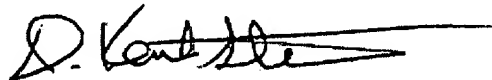
III. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing remarks, Applicants respectfully request the reconsideration and reexamination of this application and the timely allowance of the pending claims. The preceding arguments are based only on the arguments in the Office Action, and therefore do not address patentable aspects of the invention that were not addressed by the Examiner in the Office Action. The claims may include other elements that are not shown, taught, or suggested by the cited art. Accordingly, the preceding argument in favor of patentability is advanced without prejudice to other bases of patentability.

Please grant any extensions of time required to enter this response and charge any additional required fees to our deposit account 06-0916.

Respectfully submitted,

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